



Increasing Strength for Older Adults

Muscles support physical strength and power. Maintaining muscle mass reduces the risk of falls and bone fractures and supports a healthy metabolism and weight.

Muscle mass can start to decrease as early as your 30s!

To maintain muscle mass:

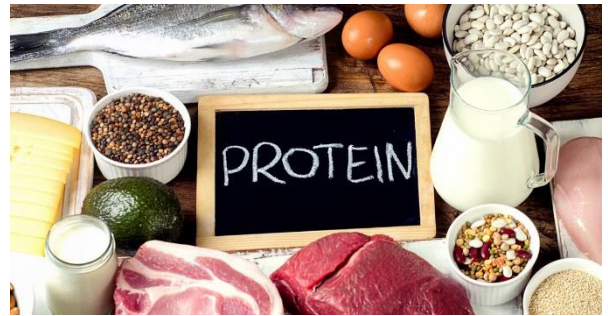
1. Eat enough protein and calories each day
2. Engage in physical activity regularly

Protein is important in building muscles, as a component in your blood, skin, nails, and internal organs. It provides enzymes that regulate bodily functions and transports nutrients, oxygen and waste throughout the body.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that older adults should strive to get:

- 5-6 ½ ounces of protein foods per day (depending on size/calorie needs) including:
 - 3 servings of dairy per day
 - 8-10 ounces of seafood per week
 - 4-5 ounces of nuts, seeds, and soy products per week

Tips to increase protein: Spread out protein throughout the day. Increase the protein you eat at breakfast and include snacks with protein. Your meal from the nutrition program contains approximately 30 grams of protein!



Ounces	Food	Estimated Serving size	Grams of Protein
1	Nuts or Seeds	¼ cup	6
1	Peanut butter	2 Tablespoons	8
3	Meat	Deck of playing cards	21
2	Cheese	4 dice or 1 domino	14
1	Egg	1 egg each	7
1-1 ½	Dried beans and	½ cup cooked	7

	legumes		
2oz	Tuna fish	¼ cup	14

Physical activity is also key to building muscle. *Older adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity gain some health benefits.* Current recommendations include*:



- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week (approx. 20-40 minutes per day)
 - Walking, hiking, yoga, raking leaves, riding a bicycle, swimming
- 2 days per week include muscle-strengthening exercises
 - Lifting weights, resistance bands, heavy gardening, sit-ups
- Include balance training
- If you are not able to do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week because of chronic conditions, you should be as physically active as your abilities and conditions allow.

*Be sure to check with your healthcare provider before starting an exercise program.

For more information:

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025
https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/older_adults/index.htm

300 Commercial St., #19 • Malden, MA 02148 • 1-800-AGE-INFO • FAX 781-324-1369 • TTY 781-321-8880

Partnering with older adults, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers residing in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield, and Winthrop.